

LOVELY AND ULTRA CHIC IS THE FROCK ALL OF BLACK

By ELEANOR HOYT BRAINERD.

LUXURY and more luxury! Extravagance and more extravagance! One might marvel at the theme; but talk of the beauties involved in the luxury and the extravagance is pleasant business, and the beauties are there.

If the unusual insistence of black, black and white, black and silver and gray among handsome afternoon and evening toilets bears relation to the mourning of France, those black and gray frocks are at least very lovely.

Frivolous black, stately black, stuffy black, clinging black—all kinds of black save cheap black are distinctly a la mode.

Black satin, black velvet, black tulle and black lace are first favorites, with jet or gold or silver for relief; and some of the most distinguished evening gowns worn at the opera have been of black velvet, built up on clinging, slightly draped lines, relieved by floating wisps of black tulle or black lace and enlivened by glittering jet. When consummately well done such a gown is a triumph. If clumsily done it falls lamentably, becomes a dowager's gown, and not even a beautiful gown for a dowager.

The Long, Slender Silhouette Seen More Often—Wonderful Brocades for Evening Gowns—Cloth of Silver or Gold Other Favored Tissues—Embroidery of All Kinds Used on Elaborate Costumes—Unsurpassed Evening Coats

ing about the feet and in a narrow square behind, swung from the shoulders by straps of jet, embroidered front and back in a curious conventionalized butterfly design whose wings spread in a straight line across the square cut front of the décolletage but sloped sharply upward along the sides of the very low cut V shaped bodice back. No sleeves, no other trimming, but

greatly to the advantage of that same evening gown's general aspect.

There are still short evening frocks, fluffy evening frocks, even hooped evening frocks, more of them, so far, than of the exaggeratedly narrow and straight or narrow and clinging effects; but one does not willy-nilly have to be a Watteau shepherdess or an early Victorian ingenue or a Second Empire siren if one prefers being a medieval countess or a Renaissance lady of high degree or an Eastern houri or a Directoire belle. Any shape will do this season so long as there is artistry in it.

Quantities of Moyen Age arrangements in evening dress are seen and some of them are lovely, but the dropped waist line seems rather harder to handle effectively in the evening than in the morning frock of serge or the afternoon frock of satin or velvet, and it is the exceptional evening frock of pronounced Moyen Age features that is really successful.

For one thing it is harder to wear gracefully than the model slightly fitted or draped. It demands a very slender and supple figure if it is not to look more than a bit blocked out and wooden. It is first and last a picture frock and must be artistically made and artistically worn, but at its

The petticoat of metallic lace or of metal embroidered tulle is used with all types of evening frocks, and flowing sleeves, or short, straight sleeves of these same metallic laces and tulle are ordinarily used if there are any sleeves at all. The puffed and fuller sleeves of early season experiment seem to have been abandoned.

For grande toilette all save the debutantes give first place to the décolletage low and square in front and either low and square in the back or lower still and V shaped in the back. There are, of course, many exceptions to this ruling—bodies cut low and round, oval, falling off the shoulders, V shaped—but the square cut front is the décolletage of the moment.

Never were such beautiful brocades worn by New York women as are being worn now. For that matter, never since old Venetian days have the manufacturers turned out in quantity such sumptuous and lovely metallic brocades, and, whether the materials have brought about the modes or the modes have brought about the materials, the evening frocks of the season lend themselves admirably to the use of these brocades.

One type of frock in particular suits these gorgeous stuffs, the frock with under robe or petticoat and bodice of lace or embroidered tulle over which unbroken lengths of silk are cleverly draped. As has been said before, this is a difficult theme to handle successfully, especially when the material in case, the brocade is too rich with gold or silver to be very supple; but some dressmakers achieve genuine triumphs in this field, and the brocades used are objects of art.

As for cloth of gold, cloth of silver, metallic tissues of laces, they are used in profusion, and, oddly enough, often enter into very demure effects, their glow and shimmer cloudily veiled or peeping out discreetly here and there.

The average evening frock starts with a foundation of silver or gold even if it is going to end in the debutante's white chiffon, and where all metal lace is too pronounced there are fine white laces, run with silver or gold thread as fine, that look as ephemeral and fairylike as frost.

Bouffants or full petticoats of lace billow on many a gown, and the frock skirts that are quite flat in front and back; and, while bouffant hip draperies no longer have the vogue they had last season, the general tendency is to give the silhouette a very wide aspect from front or back view, but to make it look thin and narrowly viewed from the side. The unguessed waist and the flaming straight sleeves of many frocks help to accentuate this effect.

However, there are still numerous evening frocks that show well defined waist curves, usually associated with very full skirts or tunics flaring widely at the sides over narrower petticoats. These often have a flat panel or under petticoat down the front of the skirt instead of continuing their flaring fullness all around, and one frequently sees the bodice and fairly row skirt of brocade with very full tulle veiling the skirt around sides and back and used in the flaring sleeves. A beautiful light blue and silver brocade made up after this fashion with violet tulle and touches of deeper violet velvet was very attractive.

Paillettes cannot be overlooked in any discussion of evening frocks this winter. They are enormously used, often with results reminiscent of stage chorus and spangled stage adventures; but skilfully and discreetly handled they are an excellent trimming, particularly adapted to the evening frock of sombre color. Some very likable frocks in dark blue, black, brown and the wine reds are chiefly of tulle and paillettes and opalescent and light hued paillettes are used with charming effect upon lighter colors.

Embroidery of all kinds figures largely among trimmings and paillettes, jewels, metallic thread and silk thread are all introduced into exquisite embroideries that are as delicate as they are lovely. One evening frock of soft, misty gray satin and chiffon, for example, had the flat front and flat trained back of satin, unbroken in line by belt or waist but slightly draped about the waist to give clinging shapeliness.

Flowing side fullness underskirt and flowing sleeves were of gray chiffon and there was a little silver tulle and lace about the bodice; but aside from the charm of line, the beauty of the frock lay in the embroidery that climbed upward from the bottom of the satin overdress—a wonderful delicate trellis design of fine silver and gold threads, opalescent paillettes, metallic pink ribbon threads, mock opals and tourmalines and topaz—all the tiny stones blending into a perfect color harmony. The frock was quiet as a moonlight night, but far more elegant than any of the showier gowns around it.

But if the evening gowns are rich and beautiful, the evening coats that cover them are even richer and more beautiful.

Never has the opera foyer displayed coat luxury as it does this season, and the crowd at the carriage entrance enjoys an unusually entertaining show. First there is ermine—and last there is ermine. Surely not an ermine has survived the trapping season and doubtless many less aristocratic beauties have helped the authentic ermine to make an American holiday.

Perhaps the entire voluminous coat with its ample folds is of ermine and only the gigantic collar and cuffs are of another fur, kolinsky by preference. Or the coat may be of rose velvet shirred full at a high waistline under a deep capelike yoke of ermine above which rises a second shirring of velvet surmounted by a small roll collar of the fur.

Black velvet and ermine too are robbed of any suggestion of stiffness by original handling and brocade of splendid richness is fairly smothered in the white fur.

Pleats of other furs of course. Enormous collars of gray rabbit or costly chinchilla on brocades or velvet or satins of rose or blue or orchid or gray, kolinsky lending richness to light colored satins and velvets. Curran red velvet lined with gray and silver and heavily trimmed in gray fur, ivory and gold brocade cape to the waistline and banded deeply in sable—but there's no resisting them. It is a riot of luxurious extravagance.

CULT OF THE CHRYSANTHEMUM.

CONSIDER the cult of the chrysanthemum.

People like roses and tulips and sweet peas and rhododendrons without getting excited about it. There is a Secretary of War whose love for pansies is said to rise to the nobility of an enthusiasm. He is an exception, of course. The chrysanthemum doesn't make quiet friends. It makes devotees, fanatics, zealots.

They all go to Central Park in November when for a month the chrysanthemum show is on in the greenhouses and the worshippers are of all ages and walks of life and both sexes. They discuss the new varieties learnedly and talk about the latest styles. For there are styles in chrysanthemums. Just now to be in the mode the chrysanthemum must be of the "simpler" design. "Simpler" goes in quotes because it is the same kind of complex simplicity a married man admires in a gown until the bill comes in. To be explicit, the fad of the moment is the flat bloom which, in blundering ignorance, might be likened to the daisy.

The sacrifice would make every hair on Head Gardener Olson's head stand up in horror, but never mind. They do look like daisies, with simple petals, sometimes in only a single row, and raised centres. It seems the raised centre is the thing to strive for. Some people spend their lives in trying to get more black spots on a gold daisy, some in trying to add an eighth of an inch to a dog's dewlap; some in trying to get a pure white collie; some in trying to put a knob in the middle of a chrysanthemum, and so it goes.

The Central Park gardeners have produced a few of these raised centre varieties themselves, but most of the new blooms they show are developed by commercial growers. Park employees haven't much time to potter with crossing and breeding flowers, it is explained.

Much of their time is taken up during November in answering questions. One woman wanted to know why she couldn't raise chrysanthemums in the open air at her home in Havana. She had tried time and again and failed. It was put more delicately to her than it is here, but the answer was that she is an amateur.

Another visitor delivered an interesting monologue on how the Japanese grow the flower and in particular the varieties which they call a "sailor." There are 60,000 blooms on display, or some such incredible number, of every shade from a yellowish green through a red so dark as to be almost black to pink and lavender and purple, yellow, white and mixtures of all these. In shape they range from the familiar shaggy ball through the smooth ball to freaks whose petals hang in long beads of scarlet and yellow, much like Spanish moss.

The show is worth the trip and it's free, which is one reason why on Sundays the police have to form a waiting line outside.



A black velvet coat with a deep cape collar and cuffs of ermine.

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A straight black velvet gown with black lace and jet, a shell pink satin brock with silver lace, and a frock of tulle silver lace and opalescent paillettes.

and they are only subduing notes in a sea of color—are indeed often more occasional than the frocks of brighter hue. There is no costume in the world more striking, more sure to catch and hold the eye, than the ultra chic black costume, and the ultra chic black costume is in evidence this season wherever modish folk congregate.

It was so at the Horse Show, which this year showed signs of becoming once more a fashionable function. It is so at the restaurants and theatres, at the opera, at private social affairs.

Luckily many genuine artists have given countenance to the trained evening frock of black velvet this autumn. Copies and modified versions of certain Worth models are seen here, there and everywhere, but, though Worth is always loyal to black velvet, other houses have done even more attractive things with the material this season than has he.

There was a stunning black velvet gown made in a New York shop for the opening night of the opera, a gown straight and narrow and clinging without any suggestion of scantiness, trail-

so extraordinarily well cut that on a slender figure its every line was a line of grace.

Less severe, though almost as straight in general silhouette, is a black velvet frock that drew admiring eyes at the Ritz one night, but this one was draped just a trifle at one side over a petticoat of black lace and dragged a double train.

These long, slender silhouettes are a delightful note in the evening crowd and are increasingly numerous, as was to be expected when Calot spoke so definitely in their favor. The result is

best it is a charming thing, and one frequently sees it at its best.

A particularly fetching and memorable example of this type was of flesh color satin and silver lace—a velvet frock that drew admiring eyes at the Ritz one night, but this one was draped just a trifle at one side over a petticoat of black lace and dragged a double train.

BEAD EMBROIDERY IS FEATURE OF STUNNING HAND BAGS

IT is a strong minded woman who is contented with one bag this season, and it is a stoic who is contented with a cheap bag.

Bag temptation lurks in every shop window, and if one cannot afford to buy the bag of one's heart's desire perhaps one can make it. A host of women have turned to bag making, are crocheting, embroidering, stitching bits of velvet and fur or old brocade and fur together, and some of these amateurs achieve surprisingly good results, though most of them despair.

It would take talents more than ordinary to produce rivals to some of the bags shown in the shops. Beading plays an important role in the making of most of them, but the ways of using the beads are many and the color schemes and shapes are infinitely varied.

Pouch shapes, big and little, fat or slim, are made up in many materials but usually in soft stuffs so that they are more or less collapsible. Some of them, though, of supple silk or velvet or fur or crocheted silks or wools, are

kept from faint heartedness by beads run into shirrings around the centre or by some slightly stiff band set under an encircling band of bead embroidery or fur.

Often the lower part of a pouch bag will be of one material, fur, silk, solid beading, velvet or cloth, while the upper half is of another material trimmed in bands of fur or beading or embroidery, or, possibly contrasting in color with the bottom of the bag and covered by an open mesh network of beads.

Three sided, four sided and five sided draw string bags are, save for their flat sided shapes, made up much as are the pouch bags and flat, two sided bags are shown in innumerable variations—kite shape, pear shape,

bracelets in jade, coral and other semi-precious stones, as well as imitations of these stones, and in the Oriental shops, too, one can pick up small pieces of beautiful antique brocade that may be made the foundations of very stunning bags. Beaded or silk tassels to weight the bottom of the pouch bag are easily found, too, and when cleverly selected add much to the knowing look of the bag.

Bead embroidery is easily enough

Black and white beading is sometimes very successful on black, white or colors, and there are some novel belts and bag designs in which a flat band of jet beads bordered in white beads is swung from a black belt buckled in jet beads with a border of white to match the bag. This idea is developed also in colors.

Flat bags, oval or round, are covered with alternating narrow bands of fur and beading following the oval or cir-



A variety of beaded bags, a fur trimmed bag and a pink velvet bag covered with roses.

done, but a sense of color is the essential thing for the worker, and more of the embroidery's effectiveness depends upon that than upon anything else. Where, as is often the case, the beading is altogether in steel or jet or gold, the same problem does not, of course, confront the worker, and for the amateur the one tone beading is a much safer proposition than the complicated color schemes.

ular lines of the bag; and effects somewhat similar are secured by making the base of silk, velvet cloth or metallic cloth and setting the circular or oval lines of fur upon this surface so that a line of the material shows alternately with the line of fur.

Metallic cloth, plain or brocaded, is the foundation of many elaborate bags and enters into the trimming scheme of more. For evening or dressy afternoon use lovely things are offered in silver or gold cloth trimmed

in metallic lace and fur or possibly embroidery in jet or contrasting metal or colored beading. On evening bags of silver or gold cloth, metallic lace, small ribbon or silk or velvet flowers are frequently applied for trimming; and there are lovely evening bags almost entirely of artificial flowers.

One that is copied in several colors was originally a full, rather flat draw string bag of pink velvet in a luscious shade. It was drawn up on pink rib-

bon which was tied in a large soft bow at one side of the bag top and there were strings of the same ribbon. Covering at least two thirds of the velvet and running up irregularly toward the top artificial roses and buds were flatly posed, roses of pink shading to cream and realistically natural.

This is another idea valuable to the home bag maker, but such artificial flowers are not cheap, and they must be applied artistically, with a leaf here and a bud there, and no limit of stiffness.

Feathers, too, are called into play by the bag designers and evening bags entirely covered with ostrich plumes in overlapping rows are really pretty, though not so effective as some bags that are less expensive.

Light colored grograin or velvet embroidered in steel beads or in gold or silver thread is liked for the evening bag, and the black or dark colored velvet or silk bag steel beaded is still exceedingly popular for general utility purposes.

Tiny change bags are made up in the materials of the larger bags, and a useful thing is the combination of very small velvet change purse and velvet card case as small, each hanging by a cord from a ring that can be slipped over a finger.

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